

# TB Times

Shirley Fannin, M.D.

Director, Disease Control Programs

February 1998

Paul T. Davidson, M.D.

Director, Tuberculosis Control Program

Volume 10 Number 2

## A Note From Dr. Davidson

Readers of the *TB Times* probably noted in last month's provisional data for the year 1997 that the month of December had 278 new confirmed cases reported, considerably more than any other month during the year. Those familiar with data from previous years will also recall that this phenomenon has occurred every single year for many years in Los Angeles County. I have been asked a number of times if there is a seasonal component to when people develop tuberculosis as the data suggests. I believe that is highly unlikely. However, there is no question that there is a seasonal pattern to the way cases are reported. Since TB data are reported annually with a fixed cut off date, any reports received after that date must be forwarded into the next year. The current standard for confirming a case indicates that this should be done within three months of opening the case to the case registry as a suspect. In reality a case should be confirmed as soon as the diagnostic and clinical data indicate the patient has TB. Unfortunately some reporting sources assume they can wait until the three months are nearly past despite having adequate data for reporting confirmation. At the end of the year this means there is a buildup of confirmable cases that have occurred during the year but have not yet been confirmed. Thus the crunch to get the paperwork done before the deadline. I would like to see us smooth out the curve to better reflect what really is happening and to avoid the proverbial December peak. Let's all resolve to confirm cases as early as possible in 1998.

## Conferences

TB Conferences on the first Friday of the month are held in the Andrew Norman Hall of Orthopaedic Hospital, located at Adams Blvd. & Flower Street. The Physician Case Presentations on the third Friday of the month are held at the TB Control Program Office, Room 506A. Participants must sign-in to receive applicable CME credit. Late arrivals of 15 minutes for a 1 hour program or 30 minutes for a 2 hour program will not receive CME credit.

\*\*\*\*\*

March 6, 1998

9:00-10:15a.m.

*"Drugs and Drug Interactions"*

Hanh Q. Lê, M.D.

Paul T. Davidson, M.D.

*Andrew Norman Hall*

10:30-11:30a.m.

TB Case Presentation/Discussion

Hanh Q. Lê, M.D.

March 20, 1998

9:00-11:30a.m.

TB Case Presentation/Discussion

Hanh Q. Lê, M.D.

*TB Control Classroom, #506A*

\*\*\*\*\*

## TB ERN Education Course

March 23-27, 1998

TB Control Program, Room 506A

## Infectious Disease & March on Tuberculosis

In the San Diego & Imperial Counties  
and Baja California Border Region

March 27 &amp; 28, 1998 at

The Hotel Real in Tijuana, Mexico

Information: (619) 297-8402

ERN Quarterly Inservices for 1998

May 1, August 7 &amp; November 6

A number of TB Control staff recently attended the National TB Conference in Atlanta, Georgia. It is always exciting to share ideas with our colleagues throughout the country and to hear about the latest information concerning tuberculosis. One particularly exciting report was that of short course preventive therapy consisting of two months of rifampin and pyrazinamide in HIV/TB infected individuals. The protective results were essentially the same as that in the control group which received six months of isoniazid. We should be very close to using this approach with groups at high risk for TB in the near future. This may allow us to complete preventive therapy in a higher percentage of HIV/TB infected as well as the homeless or other transient groups. It will also make directly observed preventive therapy cost-effective and programatically possible.

---

---

## What is CTCA?

The California Tuberculosis Controllers Association (CTCA) is an affiliate of the California Conference of Local Health Officers (CCLHO) and an organization of and for local health officials who are working to eliminate tuberculosis in California. Its members include local TB controllers, nurses, health educators and other allied health professionals. CTCA provides a forum for interjurisdictional communications and problem solving, and the organization works closely with the State TB Control Branch on a number of projects, including twice-yearly educational meetings and the creation of joint guidelines.

In October 1997, the Fall conference addressed HIV-related TB issues. TB Control staff from Los Angeles County contributed by presenting a difficult case for discussion by an expert panel. Our staff also assisted with workshop presentations.

Los Angeles TB Control staff also have served as CTCA officers, and have shared their expertise by assisting with writing and reviewing statewide guidelines for reporting TB cases and suspects, case management, contact investigation and preventive therapy.

Local public health personnel are encouraged to participate in CTCA's activities and to attend the educational conferences if possible. The Spring conference will focus on TB in correctional facilities and will be held in Sacramento, California from May 11-13, 1998. For more information on the conference, please call (510) 883-6077.

The TB Control Program would like to acknowledge Fatima Shahrabani, former CTCA Association Director, for her dedicated work and many contributions to the CTCA and Los Angeles County. We wish her well in future endeavors! - A. Nitta

---

---

## Hospital Admission Procedure for TB Patients

The Liaison Public Health Nurse for TB Control at each County facility can be of assistance in getting patients admitted to King-Drew, Harbor-UCLA, High Desert and Olive View Medical Centers.

The procedure for hospital admissions is as follows. Notification of the Liaison Public Health Nurse with information on the patient should include the name, birthdate, smear status (*if known*), reason for admittance, and a treatment plan (*if known*). The LPHN will then locate an isolation bed and make arrangements for an admitting physician to accept the patient. In some instances, the LPHN can arrange a direct admission to a bed rather have the patient wait in the emergency area for evaluation. Another option for these facilities (*with the exception of High Desert*) is to send the patient with a referral to the emergency room.

The best way to admit a patient to LAC-USC is to send the patient through the emergency room with a referral. Should the decision be made by the emergency physician to admit the patient, then an isolation bed will be found by the physician or the patient may be transferred to another County facility. Please notify the LPHN of any admission of TB patients to facilitate more rapid reporting to the district.

The following are the names and phone numbers of the county hospital liaison nurses: Tearah Taylor, King-Drew, 310-668-4420; Lisa Paaske, Harbor-UCLA, 310-222-3443; Rhena Carusillo, High Desert, 805-945-8576; Marilyn Beattie, Olive View, 818-364-4590; and Bonnie Beasley and Acacia Blanc, LAC-USC, 213-226-7962. -M. Beattie

# The Impact of Tuberculosis on a Global Scale

## World TB Day: March 24, 1998

As individuals involved in and dedicated to the control and eradication of TB, we frequently read statistics regarding the global nature of tuberculosis. However, do we ever really grasp the real impact of TB on a global scale? Is it possible that we lose sight of the global implications of tuberculosis as we work so faithfully to do our part to eradicate tuberculosis in Los Angeles County?

On World TB Day in 1996, WHO released a Fact Sheet on global tuberculosis incidence. The fact is that TB Control efforts and incidence in other countries (particularly developing countries) impact our TB Control efforts in the United States and in particular, Los Angeles County. It is estimated that one person in the world becomes infected with TB every second and that approximately one third of the world's population is currently infected with the tuberculosis bacillus. In the next ten years it is estimated that 90 million people will develop TB disease and that upwards of 30 million people will die as a result. Tuberculosis is of particular concern in developing countries where almost one quarter of preventable deaths in adults can be attributed to TB. In fact, TB kills more adults each year than AIDS, malaria and other tropical diseases combined, and is responsible for the deaths of an estimated 170,000 children. Furthermore, TB kills more women every year than all other causes of maternal mortality combined. This has a tremendous impact on the health and well-being of the family.

More important, TB is a disease that is not restricted to developing countries and by international borders. Many industrialized countries have been impacted by the global nature of the problem



through increased immigration, travel and the large number of refugees who are infected with TB. We are impacted by the TB Control practices and policies of other countries.

In 1982, in order to bring more widespread attention to the global nature and impact of TB, the International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease (IUATLD) declared March 24th as official World TB Day. World TB Day has been observed on March 24th of each year since. This day was selected to commemorate the day in 1882 when Dr. Robert Koch announced his discovery of the TB bacillus as the cause of tuberculosis. As a result of this discovery, great strides have been made in the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of TB.

In 1996, WHO joined with IUATLD and other organizations involved in the control and eradication of TB to increase the visibility and impact of this important day. The purposes of World TB Day are to bring attention to the impact of tuberculosis on a worldwide scale, to increase the efforts into global TB elimination and to increase both public knowledge of tuberculosis but also research into new and better ways of fighting TB. It is hoped that the result of these efforts will decrease the TB incidence on a global scale and will also result in a reduction of TB in our own community, Los Angeles County.

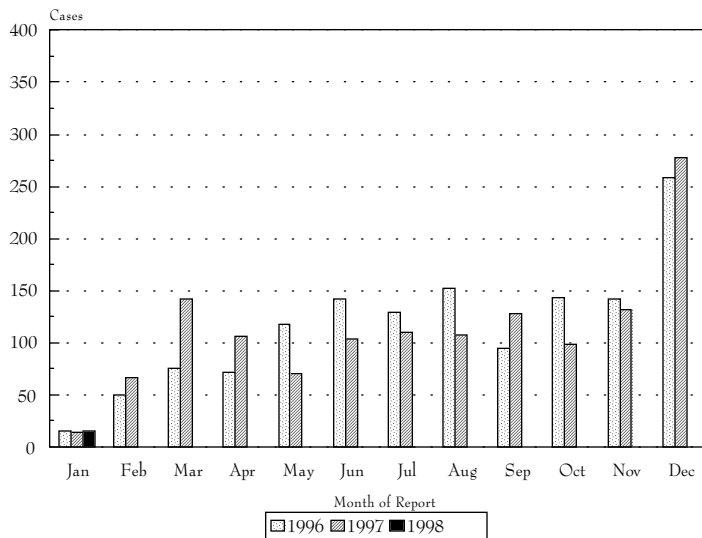
For information on how to participate in World TB Day activities and to increase awareness of TB in the community, consult the WHO Global Tuberculosis Program Web Page at [www.who.ch/gtb/](http://www.who.ch/gtb/). -W.D.



Waaa . . . I want a skin test **NOW!!!**

The TB Control Program would like to congratulate two members of our staff for wonderful additions to their families. Laura Knowles, M.S.P.H., TB Epidemiologist, welcomed her son Michael Cyrus to the family on January 30th at 7 lbs and 13.5 oz. Lisa Paaske, R.N., TB Liaison, welcomed her son Tristan Paaske on January 31st at 8 lbs and 3oz.

# Los Angeles County Tuberculosis Control Tuberculosis Incidence By Month of Report, 1996-1998



## *TB Times Editorial Staff*

### ***Editor-in-Chief***

Paul T. Davidson, M.D.

### ***Managing Editor***

Phillip L. Moore III, M.P.A.

### ***Editorial Staff***

Wendi Drummond, M.P.H., Epidemiology Analyst

David Gambill, M.Sc., Program Manager

TB Times is a monthly publication to provide information to those interested in TB surveillance and TB Control Program activities. Please forward your articles, comments or suggestions to:

### ***TB Times***

Tuberculosis Control Program

2615 S. Grand Ave., Rm. 507

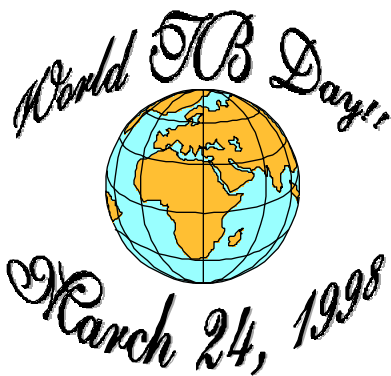
Los Angeles, CA 90007

Office: (213) 744-6160

Fax: (213) 749-0926

## ***TB Times***

County of Los Angeles  
Department of Health Services  
Tuberculosis Control Program  
2615 S. Grand Ave., Room 507  
Los Angeles, CA 90007



## February Topics of Interest...

- ⇒ What is CTCA?
- ⇒ Impact of TB on a Global Scale
- ⇒ Hospital Admission Procedure for TB Patients